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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO. 25X1

COUNTRY East Germany

SUBJECT Breakdown of EKO Furnace I

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PLACE ACQUIRED

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. On 11 October 1952 Director of the Main Department for Iron Industry, Ministry of Mining and Smelting, (fnu) Steinwand wrote to the director of Eisenhuettenkombinat Ost (EKO) concerning the serious condition of EKO blast furnace I and requested that preparations be made to repair the furnace. Repair work was to have been completed by 25 October 1952. On the night of 13 - 14 October 1952, however, blast furnace I broke down at the taphole. A committee was immediately formed and given the task of investigating the breakdown. The committee made the following suggestions:

   a. rebuild the taphole every seven days
   b. make taphole forms (Stichformen) 1 to 10 at least 50 percent narrower
   c. tap the furnace every three days and empty it completely
   d. use as little slag as possible
   e. use foundry iron with a high silicon content to try to line the bottom of the furnace (Wachsen des Bodens)
   f. in order to protect the ladle coupler (Pfannenkuppler) set up the ladles at an appropriate distance
   g. in order to protect the ladle coupler hang thick plate screens at danger spots
   h. in order to prevent iron from running into gutter channel (Fluterrinne) when the furnace breaks down, build a catch basin out of fire clay
   i. close all passages into the furnace area
   j. put up warning signs on the grounds
   k. keep unauthorized persons off the grounds
   l. conduct inspections of the steel plate lining from the heating unit (Waermestelle) while the taphole is being repaired and whenever the furnace is not in operation

2. Since the measures advised by the committee could not be expected to prevent another rupture of the blast furnace, Steinwand ordered that the furnace

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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be inspected again on 20 November. The inspection was then postponed to 22 November. In the night of 21 to 22 November 1952 blast furnace I did break down again, but no great damage resulted, since the breakdown occurred shortly before tapping. An operational staff went into action immediately. On 24 November Chief Engineer (Ing) Koenig presented plans for repairing the furnace to Minister of Mining and Smelting Fritz Selbmann. According to these plans it would take 11 weeks to put the furnace back into operating shape. It was decided to line the bottom of the furnace with carbon blocks instead of chamotte as originally planned. Siemens-Plania was consulted and set up the following delivery schedule: Lower layer (Lage) by 10 December 1952, the middle layer by 22 December 1952, and the upper layer by 10 January 1953. The first two deadlines were satisfactory to Ministry officials, but the third deadline had to be advanced by five days. It turned out that Siemens-Plania would be unable to lay the blocks, so EKO was ordered to begin negotiations with the private firm of Gerhard Thiel in Halle. EKO transferred its stone dressing capacity to processing the blocks which will be needed after the three layers of carbon blocks are laid in the furnace. EKO incorporated numerous other changes in the mechanical and electrical equipment of the furnace into its repair plan so that the time the furnace was out of operation could be fully exploited. It was extremely difficult to procure the needed materials for these smaller alterations, since such repairs had not been planned. The smaller repairs, however, will not postpone the resumption of production after the completion of the major repair job.